

**USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan**

**2013-2014**

## State Conservationist Statement

As State Conservationist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Maine, I fully support the policy of USDA to provide equal opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political beliefs, and marital or familial status. I am fully dedicated to ensuring that all persons associated with NRCS in Maine comply with every aspect of our Nation's Civil Rights laws and policies.

Discrimination is illegal, and there will be zero tolerance for any form of discrimination. It not only affects the work environment but also often the personal life of those involved. Unfortunately, instances of discrimination and harassment are still occurring in our agency. For this reason, it is imperative that we assure equal opportunity for our clients and respect the diversity of our employees and partners.

Our employees are our greatest asset. We must strive to create and maintain an inclusive environment in which every employee is respected, trusted, and valued regardless of differences.

Accountability is key. Employees will be held accountable for doing their part to ensure that all applicants, program participants, customers, partners, and employees are provided equal access to the opportunities, programs, and services available. Accordingly, I am counting on all managers, supervisors, and employees to demonstrate their knowledge and commitment of our Civil Rights laws, policies, and principles through a positive personal example and swift, reasonable, and credible response to identified problems.

I look forward to working with you to assure that our employees, partners, and clients find an agency and work environment that is positive, productive, and focused on natural resource conservation.

**STC Name:**

Juan C. Hernandez

**STC Signature:**

**Date:**

January 14, 2013

## Workforce Profile and Targets

See Attachment 1 – Workforce Diversity Tables as of 12/30/12.

## Outcome 1

NRCS Maine values EEO and Diversity and the work environment is free from racial and sexual harassment.

Initiative	Task /Action	Timeframe	Accountability	Measures of success
Managers and leaders are aware of their EEO responsibilities.	STC issues CR and EO policy statement	Feb 2013	STC	Statement will be issued with this plan. <b>Complete</b>
The performance management criteria for managers and leaders include the ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce and promote an inclusive work culture.	All supervisors have EO/CR critical element in their performance standards.	October 2012	SAO	<b>Complete</b>
A Civil Rights Committee is established to oversee responsibility and achievement of the Plan's initiatives including review of demographics data.	CRC will review plan and demographics data twice a year to provide updates or recommendations to STC.	Sept 30, 2013	CRC Chair	Review and recommendations provided to STC.  <b>CRC reviewed plan on 3/29/13 and made recommendations for plan revision and update.</b>

## Outcome 2

Workplaces are free from employment practices that are biased or discriminate unlawfully against employees or potential employees.

Initiative	Task /Action	Timeframe	Accountability	Measures of success
Recruitment and selection practices provide equal opportunity and flexibility for all employees and potential employees.	Selection practices follow agency policies and procedures.	Sept 30, 2013	SAO	Adherence to agency policies.
Training in bias free methods is provided to selection panel members.	Provide OJT as needed to selecting officials to assure bias free selections.	Sept 30, 2013	SAO	<p>In late FY 12, supervisors took: Hiring Manager's training, Pathways Program, and Veteran Employment Training for Federal Hiring Manager.</p> <p>In addition to training above, supervisors completed No Fear Act Training by 4/1/13.</p>
Retention and career development practices provide equal opportunity and flexibility for all employees.	Training and Detail opportunities are analyzed to assure employees have equal opportunity for needed training and career development experiences.	Sept. 30, 2013	SAO, ASTC Ops	Training and detail opportunities provided to employees.
<p>EEO and cross cultural awareness training is provided to all staff.</p> <p>Note: NRCS Maine provided three years of Diversity Training to all employees in 2010,</p>	Supervisors take training: "Workplace Harassment for Supervisors and	September 30, 2013	SAO	Supervisors take required training.

2011 and 2012.	Managers”			
There is an effective Grievance Resolution Process where people feel able to raise concerns and issues.	Reminders are integrated in various processes: QA Reviews, Training, Quick Notes, annual Open Season meetings hosted by Admin.	Sept 30, 2013	SAO	<p>Complete processes that include grievance processes.</p> <p>Open Season Meetings held: PI, 11/13; Lewiston, 11/27 and Bangor, 11/29. No Fear Act Training taken by all employees by 4/1/13 included grievance guidance.</p>

### Outcome 3

Employment programs and practices recognize and include strategies to achieve workforce diversity.

Initiative	Task /Action	Timeframe	Accountability	Measures of success
Demographic data is systematically collected to monitor and report on the progress of all diversity groups.	Monitor demographic data 2X annually	January and June 2013	SAO	Report and analysis developed.
Diversity objectives are identified to define the workforce profile suited to the agency's business needs.  FY 13 & 14 objective: Recruit and hire one Hispanic female and one black male or female.	Conduct analysis of demographic data annually and develop diversity objectives.	Sept 30, 2013	STC, CRC, SAO, ASTC Operations	Diversity objective for FY 13-14
Strategies are developed and implemented to attract, retain and provide career development opportunities for the diversity groups:				
Host summer students through Pathways Program	Host 2-3 summer student interns with recruitment focus increase diversity.	May-Sept 30, 2013	STC	Summer Students hired.
Attend Job Fair in Puerto Rico to recruit students.	Increase exposure of Hispanic students to Maine NRCS	Sept 30, 2013	STC	Hispanic Students hired through pathways program.  STC attended Job Fair from September 30 – October 6, 2012. Students created voluntary database.  Plans are confirmed for

				October 2, 2013 Job Fair in Puerto Rico for FY 2014 recruitment.
Staff job fair at Unity College and UMO.	Attend 2 job fairs	January – April 2013	HRS	Job Fairs attended  Completed: University of Maine Orono – January 30, 2013; Unity – February 6, 2013

#### Outcome 4

##### Maintain a relevant and achievable EEO Management Plan through Communication, Review and Amendment and Evaluation

Initiative	Task /Action	Timeframe	Accountability	Measures of success
The Plan and its policies and programs are communicated to all staff.	Send out plan via bulletin	February 15, 2013	Paré	Bulletin
The Plan is monitored, reviewed and amended to ensure strategies remain relevant to the operations of the organization.	CRC to review plan quarterly.	Sept 30, 2013	CRC	Report to STC of review and recommendations.  CRC reviewed plan on 3/29/13 and updated plan with proposed revisions and progress.
Assure CR/EO compliance in Field Offices.	Civil Rights Compliance Reviews will be conducted in field offices: Lewiston, Augusta, and Belfast.	Sept 30, 2013	Paré, CRC, PAS	Complete 3 compliance reviews